

# *"Other Sheep I Have"*



## **A Handbook on Church Evangelism**

**Published By**

**The Evangelism Committee**

**under the auspices of**

**The Home Mission Board**

**of**

**The General Conference of the Mennonite  
Church of North America**

**July, 1941**



# "OTHER SHEEP I HAVE"

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold:  
them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice;  
and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

John 10:16

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July, 1941

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*Hillsboro, Kansas 1992*





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# INTRODUCTION

The Evangelism Committee, a sub-committee of the Home Mission Board, has recently conducted a questionnaire survey of the status of Evangelism in the churches of the General Conference. The questionnaire sought information along four lines:

1. The Need for Evangelism in Mennonite Communities
2. The Efforts Made in Evangelism by Mennonite Churches
3. The Mennonite Attitude Toward Various Evangelism Methods
4. The Possibilities of Conference Aid Coordination in Mennonite Evangelism.

The questionnaires were sent out to 123 ministers listed in the 1940 Year Book as serving churches in the United States. Of these questionnaires seventy-one were returned (57 per cent). The percentage of responses from the various districts were as follows: Eastern—67 per cent; Middle—55 per cent; Western—51 per cent; Northern—55 per cent; and Pacific—78 per cent. Some questionnaires were also sent to Canadian ministers but only a few were returned. The well-balanced distribution of responses from the various districts indicates that the results of this study represent a fair cross-cut of the ideas of interested ministers.

## I. THE NEED FOR EVANGELISM

### Questionnaire Results

1. The large majority of Mennonite communities contain many unchurched, providing large and fertile fields for evangelism.
2. Only twenty of the seventy-one ministers responding report that they have made religious surveys of their communities.
3. Only four out of the seventy-one ministers responding feel that sufficient effort is being made to reach the unchurched in their communities.

4. The chief causes for loss of Mennonite members listed are (a) Inter-marriage, (b) Indifference, (c) emotional Sects, (d) Quarrels and Misunderstandings, (e) Worldliness. Other causes mentioned are: No room, no church before, language problems, opposition to Mennonite doctrine, geographic distances to church, faulty leadership, lack of spiritual life in the church.

### **Observations**

1. Most ministers who responded recognize the need for evangelism but many are uncertain as to methods of procedure.

2. A careful study on the conservation of church members needs to be made. This study must consider the problems of inter-marriage, indifference, and emotional religious sects.

## **II. THE EFFORTS MADE IN EVANGELISM**

### **Questionnaire Results**

1. Fifty-seven out of seventy-one (80 per cent) report that they have some type of special evangelical or inspirational services each year.

2. Forty-one of these fifty-seven (72 per cent) report that they used Mennonite leaders for these special meetings. Eight (14 per cent) report that they used both Mennonite and non-Mennonite leaders. Eight (14 per cent) report that they used only non-Mennonite leaders.

3. Only eleven ministers report the use of a Decision Day in Sunday School. Four report the use of Decision Cards. Forty-seven (66 per cent) say their Sunday School teachers seek to win pupils to Christ. Forty-two (59 per cent) report that their Sunday Schools try to reach the unchurched.

4. Other channels of Evangelism listed were: Young People's Consecration Services, Dramatics, Tracts, Street Meetings, Men's and Women's Organizations, Gospel Teams, Vacation Bible Schools, Church Evangelism Committee, Home Visitation, Jail and Hospital Visits, Migrant Work, etc.



### Observations

1. Too many churches rely on the special services for evangelism and do not utilize lay members to carry on a year-round program of evangelism.

2. The assertion of some ministers that there are no Mennonite leaders available for evangelistic work must be modified since at least forty-one churches have used Mennonite leaders.

3. There is great need for the development of evangelism in Sunday Schools and of a proper understanding of the relation of religious education and evangelism.

## III. THE ATTITUDES TOWARD EVANGELISM

### Questionnaire Results

Method	Favorable	Un- favorable	Untried or left blank
1. Catechism Classes	59	3	9
2. Mass Meetings	50	10	11
3. Altar Calls	24	22	25
4. Decision Cards	6	25	40
5. Street Meetings	9	29	33
6. Personal Work	57	1	13

The methods listed as most effective in order of frequency mentioned were: Personal Work, Evangelistic Services, Catechism Class, Evangelistic Preaching, Bible Studies, Church Organizations.

### Observations

1. There is a wide difference of opinion in Mennonite groups as to what methods of evangelism are legitimate and effective. This calls for tolerance in the use of various methods.

2. Personal Work, the Catechism Class, and Mass Meetings rank high both in favor and effectiveness.

## IV. CONFERENCE AID IN EVANGELISM

This part of the questionnaire was evidently misunderstood by many ministers. They feared that if some form of Conference Aid were adopted they would lose the privilege of choosing their own local leaders. Twenty-nine

ministers expressed unqualified interest in General Conference leadership in Evangelism while eleven more indicated conditional interest. Forty ministers (56 per cent) thus seem to favor some form of General Conference leadership. Nineteen ministers (27 per cent) prefer a District Conference type of leadership while twelve (17 per cent) state their preference to continue doing their evangelistic work without Conference Aid.

Various ministers listed qualifications which they would demand of an acceptable leader. These include: Bible-trained, spirit-filled, not professional evangelist but experienced pastor, not too emotional, inspirational, educational, conservative, aggressive, fundamental, humble, one who is "all things to all men".

### **Observations**

1. There is a definite interest in and real possibility for a helpful General Conference Leadership in Evangelism if suitable personnel can be found.

2. There is need for further study as to just what a Conference leader or leaders could do and could not do.

The results of this questionnaire survey suggested to the Evangelism Committee the avenues of study which are pursued in this pamphlet. These articles were then prepared in a spirit of humble service and with the prayerful hope that they may help to clarify and promote the great cause of evangelism in the churches of the General Conference.

The Evangelism Committee desires to thank the following for their assistance in the preparation and publication of this pamphlet: Rev. Walter Gering, Professor Arnold C. Schultz, Dr. J. H. Langenwalter and Rev. A. J. Neuenchwander who contributed articles for this publication; the Board of Publication which gave its authorization for this task; and the Home Mission Board under whose counsel and support the Evangelism Committee has labored.

### **THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE**

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# **I. EVANGELISM: WHAT IS IT?**

**By REV. WALTER GERING**

"I HAVE NO OTHER PLAN." Such are the words placed upon the lips of our Lord in an imaginary story of the past. It is said that when our Lord returned into the heavenly places after having spent the years of his earthly life and having given His life upon the cruel cross He was met by the angel Gabriel. Gabriel, deeply interested in the work which the Lord had accomplished, inquired as to the Lord's plans for the further propagation of the Gospel message. The Lord responded that He had instructed His disciples concerning that and He was depending upon them to carry out His commission. Gabriel, rather dubious about the plan of committing such a sacred responsibility into the hands of frail humans, responded: "Yes, Lord, but what if they fail you; what is your plan then?" To which the Lord responded: "Gabriel, I am depending upon them. If they fail me—I have no other plan."

I have no other plan might well be the keynote of all evangelistic effort for evangelism is but **THE CARRYING OUT OF THE LORD'S SACRED COMMISSION**. In the 16th chapter of Mark and the 15th verse we read these words: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation." An examination of this passage in the light of the original language reveals an interesting fact. The root form used in this passage and translated "Gospel" in our English Bibles is the same form used in Act 21:8, Eph. 4:11, 2 Tim. 4:5, where it has been translated "evangelist". Thus the great commission of our Lord might be read: "Go ye into all the world and evangelize the whole creation." Evangelism is but the carrying out of the great commission of our Lord given unto His Church. It is His plan for the propagation of the Gospel.

As the simple carrying out of His great commission it might well be defined as the **EARNEST, AGGRESSIVE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL WITH THE GOAL IN MIND OF MAKING DISCIPLES**. The early disciples were sent out to preach, that is to publish, proclaim openly after the manner of a herald; always with the suggestion of formality, gravity, and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed. As J. W. Chapman once put it:

“Evangelism is simply rolling away the stone and giving the dead a chance to hear the Word of Life.”

As the Lord's plan for the promulgation of the Gospel Evangelism must be considered as an **INTEGRAL PART OF GOD'S PLAN AND PURPOSE IN BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST**. Constantly we face the danger of narrowing down the scope of evangelism until we think of it only in terms of calling men to repent from their sin of unbelief and coming to Christ in faith. We have come to think of evangelism as the call of the Church to the unsaved; when it has accomplished that purpose it has fulfilled its mission. Without doubt evangelism includes within its scope of activity the calling of unsaved unto Christ. Certainly that was included in its scope according to the great commission given unto the early disciples. They were sent out into a world of unbelief as a witness unto the truth with the purpose in mind of making disciples. That call is just as imperative today as ever for out of a population of over 2000 millions, at least one-third are still completely without the knowledge of the Gospel message of Christ. They are not only unconverted but also unevangelized. Included within the other two-thirds who have been evangelized millions still live in unbelief and godlessness. The imperative call today is still: “Make disciples of all nations.” That is within the scope of evangelism.

But the scope of Evangelism must be widened until it includes not only the making of disciples but the making of **CHRISTLIKE DISCIPLES**. It has as its goal the building up of the believer until in his character and daily life he become increasingly Christlike; a light shining forth until men see His good works and glorify the Father in heaven. Evangelism which fails to bring about such character fails in its fundamental purpose.

Nowhere is the fundamental scope of Evangelism more clearly brought out than in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, where he writes these words: “And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full



grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." 4:11-13. Two thoughts are definitely expressed in these words: First, we are assured that the work of the evangelist is a work instituted by the Lord Himself. It is of the ascended Lord that the apostle speaks in these verses. This ascended Christ has bestowed upon His Body the Church, gifts for the carrying out of His great commission. Paul in his mention of these divine gifts places the evangelist among the five mentioned, thus clearly indicating that evangelism is an integral part of God's program of redemption. It is divinely sanctioned for it was instituted by the Lord Himself not only by His command but also by His gift of the spirit of Evangelism.

The second thought expressed in these words of the apostle unto the church at Ephesus is that the WORK OF THE EVANGELIST GOES HAND IN HAND WITH THE WORK OF THE APOSTLE, PROPHET, PASTOR AND TEACHER. All have the same fundamental goal in mind, namely the perfecting of the saints, the work of ministering, the building up of the body of Christ. Thus wherever the church goes in its promulgation of the Gospel evangelism is to be a part of its normal life; it is to be coordinated with the other phases of church work for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, whether that involves the drawing into the fold such who have never become a part of His Body or the deepening perfecting of those already members of His Body. Evangelism thus is never satisfied with the mere making of converts, it is fundamentally interested in leading men unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

With this thought in mind it becomes evident that evangelism is MORE THAN A MERE WEEK OF SPECIAL SERVICES CONDUCTED ANNUALLY. Consider the words written unto Timothy by the apostle Paul: "I charge thee—preach the Word, be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching,—do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry." 4:1-5. Timothy receives the admonition as a minister stationed in charge of an organized church to fulfil his ministry by doing the work of an evangelist. In no sense of the word is this in opposition to the thought that man may be called to special evangelistic work traveling from community to community proclaiming the Gospel mes-

sage. In fact, the only other reference in the Scriptures in which the word Evangelist is used is that describing one who did that very kind of work. Acts 21:8 gives us what appears to be the primary Christian use of the word. Philip, one of the Seven is there called the "evangelist". It has been said that he received this name because he was one of those who after the martyrdom of Stephen went forth and preached the Gospel in Samaria, in the desert and all the coast cities. He was a travelling evangelist who proclaimed the Word unto those who had never heard it before. Paul's words unto Timothy, "Do the work of an evangelist" are not an indication that special calls to evangelistic work are not given but they are an indication that by no means is special evangelistic work confined to particular called evangelists. It is the normal work of the every-day ministry. It is a daily task and responsibility which every minister must face in fulfilling his ministry. Special periods of evangelistic services conducted by some one called in by the church have their proper place and should be encouraged. They bring deepening experiences to those who already belong to the Body of Christ, they are a constant challenge to those still outside. But such services, valuable as they are, can never take the place of the daily work of an evangelist by the ministry itself. That message of Paul unto the young minister Timothy is his word to the ministry in general. "Do the work of an evangelist—fulfil thy ministry."

But far be it from anyone to confine the work of evangelism to that of the ministry only. Evangelism is the **PURPOSE FOR WHICH EVERY CHILD OF GOD HAS BEEN CALLED.** In the 15th chapter of St. John we have these words: Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide." These words were spoken by our Lord unto the disciples, it is true, but they might well be considered His sacred word unto every one who follows Him. So it was that the early Christians understood it for the Book of Acts is filled with reports of evangelistic work done by the laity. Gibbon in giving his reasons for the remarkable spread of Christianity in the early days states that it "became the most sacred duty of a new convert to diffuse among his friends the inestimable blessing which he had received." During the great persecution in Jeru-

saalem it was the believers, not the apostles who were scattered unto the uttermost regions. And these simple believers, driven into strange territories, released the Gospel into the farthest realms of darkness. So it has been in every generation since. Great forward movements in the past have repeatedly come when the Church as a whole has been awakened unto its sacred trust. So it will be in the future. One of the tragic tendencies of our day is that of making evangelism the responsibility of the official ministry to the exclusion of the laity in the Church. The responsibility for active leadership in the matter of evangelism may well be placed at the door of the ministry. But the carrying out, the execution of this task rests upon all who profess His Name. It is for each to choose within the sacred sanctuary of his own heart whom he will serve: Christ or the world. But once he has chosen to serve Christ he has no choice in this matter of spreading the good news. To every believer there comes the same challenge: "Ye did not choose me but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit." When the Church once more catches the vision of its sacred trust, when once more every believer in the church shall begin to feel his own individual responsibility in evangelizing the world in which he lives, then shall the Church again move forward in its conflict against the hosts of darkness. Then shall once more the torch burn brightly casting its beams of light unto the farthest regions of darkness and the world shall take note that "they have been with Christ."

"Father, can it be that you are afraid to die?", asked an anxious son as the hour of departure seemed near. All thru the years the son had considered his father as one who professed Christ. Now in the hour of death a strange expression of concern appeared upon the brow of the father. "No, my son, I am not afraid to die," answered the father, "not afraid to die, but I am ashamed to die." Thoughts such as these filled the mind of the writer as he penned the words to the well known hymn:

"Must I go and empty handed",  
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?  
Not one day of service give Him,  
Lay no trophy at His feet?

Not at death I shrink nor falter,  
For my Savior saves me now;  
But to meet Him empty-handed,  
Tho't of that now clouds my brow.

O the years of sinning wasted,  
Could I but recall them now,  
I would give them to my Savior,  
To His will I'd gladly bow.

O Ye saints, arouse, be earnest,  
Up and work while yet tis day;  
Ere the night of death o'ertake thee,  
Strive for souls while still you may.



## II. EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By REV. ERLAND WALTNER

A prominent evangelistic preacher who attracted large Sunday audiences and who boasted of a hundred conversions a year declared, in substance, "It is my business to get people converted. I am not concerned about the development of their Christian lives; God will look after that."

A noted educational preacher who is himself a scholar and who adorns his sermons with precious gems out of the treasuries of his learning, was heard to say, in effect, "It's my business to unfold to people the Christian way of life. I am not so much concerned about the conversion of souls: God will look after that."

Both of the men just described may be rendering a significant and worthy service in the cause of the Kingdom, but in their attitudes on evangelism and Christian education they represent two common misconceptions: (1) that fervent evangelism makes Christian education insignificant and unnecessary and (2) that Christian education makes evangelism superfluous. In view of these existing attitudes it is the burden of this article to point out that both evangelism and Christian education are essential in a Scripturally-founded and well-balanced church program.

### I. HOW THEY DIFFER

The proposition which has been presented calls for a definition of terms. Much of the quibbling over the relative importance of evangelism and Christian education would be settled if a clear definition of terms were given. These definitions are not easy to give since both "evangelism" and "Christian education" have been defined in scores of ways. In fact, some definitions of "evangelism" are so broad as to include all that could be meant by Christian education, while some definitions of "Christian education" clearly swallow up all that is meant by evangelism. However, as the terms are used in common

## regilious parlance, EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ARE NOT NECESSARILY IDENTICAL.

Evangelism, in its original sense, means the proclamation of the "evangel" or the "good news" of the gospel. This proclamation is directed to the specific end of leading men to an acceptance of that evangel in faith and a commitment of their lives to Jesus Christ. It is telling men that "Christ came into the world to save sinners." It is calling upon men to respond to the grace of God. George A. Buttrick says, "Evangelism is **not** a great many things; it is not an affront to the intellect, nor an exploitation of emotions, nor a package of fear, nor a coercion of God. But it is a reverencing of personality; its mood is a universal compassion; it awaits God's pleasure, it declares that any real conversion is a revolution of a man's whole life. Its roots are in prayer. It depends on grace. It looks forward to that unseen miracle in which the Spirit of God finds and heals the broken spirit of man."

Christian education, on the other hand, is also concerned with the proclamation of the "evangel" of grace. However, in its method of approach and its manner of presentation it seeks more to analyze, to develop, to explain, and to evaluate the content of that "evangel" with the intent of leading pupils into an intelligent and consistent application of the gospel to daily living. Evangelism is concerned with the sowing of "the seed"; Christian education is concerned with the cultivation of "the soil". Evangelism speaks in terms of "birth"; Christian education speaks in terms of "growth". Evangelism directs its appeal to the will, calling for a decision; Christian education directs its appeal to the intellect, calling for an application of the gospel to life.

The gospel writers, in describing the ministry of Jesus, recognize evangelism and education as two different functions in Christ's mission. For example, in Matthew 9:35 we read, "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, **teaching** in their synagogues, and **preaching the gospel** (evangel) of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." The Apostle Paul likewise distinguishes the two functions in his picture of the organic unity of the Christian Church and the differing gifts of divine grace in Ephesians 4:11, 12: "And he

gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, **evangelists**; and some, **pastors** and **teachers**; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Thus in the Early Church the functions of evangelism and education were not considered identical but each had an essential place in the total program and ministry of the Church.

## II. WHY BOTH ARE NECESSARY

Having suggested that evangelism and Christian education refer to somewhat different functions in the total ministry of the Church, a second proposition of this paper is that **NEITHER EVANGELISM ALONE NOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ALONE IS SUFFICIENT** in a well-rounded and adequate Church program.

In churches where interest in evangelism excludes interest in Christian education, much superficiality and instability prevail. Churches which are interested only in the **securing of a decision** will undoubtedly have some responses, but unless they are also concerned with the **conservation** of the converts, the abiding value of their work may well be questioned. It would seem that they are building with "wood, hay, stubble". A lady, who revels in evangelistic meetings and who attends as many of them as possible, once remarked to the writer, "Why, I just get converted over and over again at those meetings." Because of inadequate Christian education, she had gained no concept of steady Christian living and growth in grace.

Moreover, when evangelism is stressed to the exclusion of an interest in Christian education, a narrow concept of salvation is developed. Salvation comes to be thought of mainly in terms of a "fire-escape" from hell, rather than in terms of the saving of the whole human personality from the devastating results of past and present sin. The high-pressure evangelist, anxious to make a good report of his work, urges people simply to raise their hands or sign a card. All too often neither he nor anyone else cares what happens after that. Surely the Apostles of the Early Church were not satisfied merely with the **securing of a decision** Christ had commissioned them to **make disciples** (learners) of all nations, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20a). Evangelism without Christian education is inadequate.

On the other hand, in churches where Christian education is stressed to the exclusion of evangelism, equally serious inadequacies arise. Here occur instances in which the educated may be well acquainted with the ethical demands of Christian living, and may be able to explain intelligently the reasons for particular tenets of the Christian faith, but who, like Nicodemus of old, cannot even "see the Kingdom of God" except they be "born" of the Spirit. They have never for themselves squarely faced and answered the question, "What does Jesus Christ mean to me?" They have never settled the issue of a **supreme loyalty** in life such as Christ demanded of the rich young ruler. They have "many things" but they lack "the one thing needful."

Also, Christian education which omits evangelism develops a cold ethics and an intellectual religion, in that it stresses standards of conduct but neglects personal acceptance of Jesus Christ. It produces a religion of the **head** but not of the **heart**. As such it is emotionally unsatisfying and morally impotent. To separate the person of Jesus Christ from his program of ethics is to separate the dynamo from the electric motor. The powerline of Christian living is personal faith in Jesus Christ. Though Christian education may analyze and explain the conduct that is Christ-like, it is only by some form of evangelism that the motive power for Christ-likeness can be appropriated.

Furthermore Christian education which neglects evangelism tends to evade the obligation of the Christian Church to the un-Christian world. It lacks the passion for the souls of men dying without Christ. It is complacent in its own achievements while men thirst for God. While it theorizes, evaluates, tests, and experiments in Christian living, millions daily face a Christ-less eternity. When an old man carrying a sack of grain fell into a river and began to drown, two Chinese stood by arguing whether it were better to save the grain so others might be fed or to save the old man who might not live long anyway. This is the spirit of Christian education which is not concerned about the reclamation of human life from the whirl-pools of sin. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WITHOUT EVANGELISM IS INADEQUATE.



### III. HOW THEY MAY BE COORDINATED

Evangelism needs Christian education. Christian education needs evangelism. But how shall the functions of both be realized in a united Church program?

While evangelism and Christian education have been differentiated in this paper, it would be a mistake to separate the two fields completely. If either function is to achieve best results, it must work in harmony with the other.

#### Plan A—Departmentalization of Functions

Some churches have found a satisfactory synthesis of the two functions by creating a Department of Evangelism and a Department of Education in the church. Each is an integral part of the whole church but is responsible for the achieving of its own tasks. The Department of Evangelism does not only work during "evangelistic campaigns" but it also promotes a year-round program of evangelism, and seeks to bring the atmosphere of evangelism into every phase of the work of the Church. The Department of Education is concerned with Christian instruction which is given to children and adults, to Christians and non-Christians. The two departments do not work in a competitive spirit nor does either minimize the importance of the other. "And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you . . . that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care of one another" (I Cor. 12:21, 25). Co-operation and mutual appreciation are essential for the success of this plan.

This plan has value in that it gives a proper place to both evangelism and Christian education. Also it provides for a continuous rather than a sporadic program of evangelism. Again, it employs the efforts of lay-members of the church in an endeavor, which, if carried on at all, is too often left solely in the hands of the pastor.

#### Plan B—Synthesis of Functions

In other churches, the coordination of functions has been achieved without departmentalization. Rather than to separate evangelism and Christian education in two

distinct departments, the two functions are carried on side by side in the same organizations and under the same leadership. In this plan, evangelism seeks to benefit from the values of Christian education and Christian education imbibes the living energies of evangelism. When evangelism gives consideration to the place of the intellect in Christian conversion, when it seeks to inform the mind as well as to save the soul, when it provides spiritual care for the promotion of Christian growth, it is "educational evangelism". On the other hand, when Christian education seeks to bring its pupils to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, when it reaches out to win those who are indifferent to the church, when its content is truly the Word of Life, it is "evangelistic education".

This plan is valuable in that it does not require a separate organization in the church to carry on each function. Churches need to guard against over-organization. There is, also, less likelihood of rivalry and competition between the two functions and a greater possibility of harmonious working. Furthermore, it brings the evangelistic atmosphere into the whole effort of the church, which gives zeal and direction to all Church activities. The Sunday School work, the Christian Endeavor work, the Men's and Women's work — all receive dynamic from one great purpose, which is, to make known the evangel of Christ unto the reclaiming and conserving of human souls.

However the synthesis of the two functions is achieved, it is all important that neither evangelism nor Christian education be omitted from the church's program. When the forces of evil use every available resource to crush all that is good in the world, the Christian Church should not be hopping along on one foot. Let it march with both feet—evangelism and Christian education—to fulfill its mission.

### III. GROUND WORK FOR A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

by REV. WILLIAM F. UNRUH

“Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?” Ps. 85:6. This prayer of the Psalmist is spoken out of the heart of every Christian who realizes the true condition of the Church today. Many people are not aware of the fact that the Church is largely asleep and needs to be awakened and revived. Some people even resent the thought that the Church needs a revival. But those who live close to God feel the need to pray as did the Psalmist.

What do people mean when they speak of a Spiritual Awakening or Revival? In its effects and results a Spiritual Awakening is the renewal of the first love of Christians which brings about the awakening of other Christians and the conversion of sinners about them. Any person who will honestly face the coolness and indifference of the Church who will honestly face the fact that millions have not yet accepted Christ must come to the conclusion that we need just this — a general renewal of our love to Christ resulting in the bringing to God those who do not yet trust in Christ Jesus. How many in the Church do you know whose whole life is dominated by a contagious love for Christ who strive persistently to bring people to the obedience of Jesus Christ? If we cannot say that at least half of the professing Christians have this spirit surely it must be taken as evidence of a need for a revival of love. How long shall it continue that millions die every generation without Christ while the Church rests in ease at Zion?

When the urgency of an awakening is felt the question of how it may be realized comes up. How do revivals come? Must we wait until God in His own good time will sweep a mighty revival over the Church, or can something be done by us now which will make it proper for God to send an awakening over the Church? God in His wise spiritual economy has ordained that a revival is as naturally a result of certain appropriate means under His blessings as a crop is a result of seed sowing under His

blessing. The coming of a revival is as dependent upon certain means which are in the hands of man as a harvest is dependent upon seed sowing which is for man to do. Although we cannot say that a revival is the effect of a cause in the ordinary sense of the term since it is given by a Supreme God and affects free moral beings, yet never-the-less God has so ordained that man must determine whether His gifts are to be given or withheld.

Now what are the means at our disposal to bring a revival into the Church? Two means are essential.

1. The first means is PRAYER — agonizing prayer. God is very wise in ordaining it thus. There must be a definite state of heart or state of mind before it becomes proper and advisable for God to give us spiritual gifts. In the 36th chapter of Ezekial the prophet promises great gifts of salvation which Christ will give—a new heart, the gift of the Holy Spirit, sanctification and victorious living—but all these gifts, the Lord says, He can give only when He is asked for them. “Never-the-less for all these things will I be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.” Ezek. 36:37. God’s spiritual gifts are very dear. They have cost the precious Blood of Christ. God will give them only where it is reasonably sure that they will be valued and safeguarded, because a spiritual blessing which is abused becomes a curse. Temporal blessings have not cost the Blood of Christ. Those God gives to the just and the unjust. Rain, sunshine, harvests and such temporal blessings God gives to all people. Not so with spiritual blessings. They have cost blood and they must be asked for to make sure they will be valued and safeguarded by the recipients.

Fortunately God has so ordained that prayer of friends may make it proper for God to bless the unsaved and needy. God’s help may come to a person in answer to another’s prayer. Someone has found that three-fourths of the miracles of Jesus were performed not because those who were helped had asked Him, but because others had interceded in faith for them. Intercessory prayer has great power with God. All of His spiritual blessings are given in answer to the intercession of Christ at the right hand of God, and in answer to the prayers of Christ’s fellow-intercessors, His joint-priests, who ask in His name because they ask in His spirit and in identification with His heart.



Church history bears ample evidence that prayer is one of the means honored by God to bring revivals into the Church. Dr. John R. Mott says that wherever throughout the world he has traced a spiritual awakening to its causes and center, it has always been found to be a prayer life that is beyond the ordinary. Dr. Pierson, Editor of the *Missionary Review of the World* says, "From the day of Pentecost there has been not one great spiritual awakening in any land which has not begun in a union of prayer, though only among two or three; no such outward, upward movement has continued after such prayer meetings have declined; and it is in exact proportion to the maintenance of such joint supplication and intercession that the Word of the Lord in any land or locality has had free course and been glorified." The Herrnhut revival in 1727 came in answer to united prayer. The great revival in America under the leadership of Charles G. Finney was characterized by a prevalence of prayer. The mighty revival in Australia came in answer to seventeen hundred cottage prayer meetings that had been held weekly long before the out-pouring of God's spirit came.

Such awakenings come in answer to agonizing prayer, a state of continual desire and anxiety of mind for the salvation of sinners. Preliminary to such revivals the minds of some believers become so filled with anxiety over the condition of the church and over the condition of lost friends that they go about their work sighing out their desires to God. This is what it means to pray without ceasing. And "do not deceive yourself with thinking that you offer effectual prayer unless you have this intense desire for the blessing. Prayer is not effectual unless it is offered up with an agony of desire."

Someone may ask, "How can I pray like that when I have no such feelings?" The answer is that we come to prevailing prayer by a protracted process and by deliberate choice. The choice lies in this that we **choose to think** about the things which touch God's heart and about the things which touch the lives of our friends who are in spiritual need. "What gets our attention gets us". It lies within our power to decide to what things we will give our attention and what shall be allowed to stir our hearts.

Let a person give himself to think (as every child of God ought) upon the shameful dishonor that comes to God as a result of the fact that even after centuries of Christian era there are still millions and millions of people who do not love and trust nor revere God. What a frustration of our loving Father's gracious purposes and of His redemption of mankind; Let him give himself to think about the millions and millions of people who have already died without Christ and have gone to hell through these centuries because the Church has been sleeping and has not given herself to the means of saving sinners as she ought. Let him give himself to think about the terrifying condition of hell as Jesus Himself describes it, and let him remember that unbelievers have nothing else to look forward to but that. Let him give himself to think upon the unspeakable sadness that would follow if his unbelieving friends and relatives and children should be lost to such a condition. Let him give himself to think about God's plan of establishing His rule, His Kingdom on earth, a Kingdom in which men would freely give Him their glad obedience, and let him think on what a blessing such a Kingdom would be to this sick world. Let a person by deliberate choice think and pray about these and kindred things and the "burden of the Lord" will become the burden of his heart and prayers. This is how we come to agonizing and prevailing prayer.

Without travail of soul over those outside of Christ, we can hardly expect great things from God. But it lies definitely within our power to come to such a spirit of prayer if we will, and therefore the responsibility of whether or not there is to be a revival among us rests upon us. What will you do about it? Do you really feel the need for an awakening in your church? Do you want one to come? Do you expect to have it come? Have you reasons to expect it to come? Is the ground work for a revival being laid in your church? If we have no spiritual awakening in the Church it is because we do not pray for it, because we are not anxious for it, because we do not put forth efforts to have it.

2. The second means to bring in a revival is the presentation of the TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL. Truth is presented to the hearts of people first by men and then by the Holy Spirit Who makes it efficacious. Conversion and

sanctification can only be expected to result when the kind of truth is applied to the heart which will produce them. The preaching, teaching and interpretation of the Word of God is therefore essential to bring saving truth to the hearts of people.

Unfortunately sin has put into the hearts of unrepentant people a great antagonism against God, and therefore this preaching of the Gospel must be seasoned with love. Jesus says, "ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake". This antagonism needs to be broken down by God's love expressing itself through human agents. Christians must give themselves to express God's love to sinners by suffering and sacrificing for their good to the extent that they come to feel the kind of love which God has for them. Without sacrifice on the part of Christians the love of Christ will not be able to break down the antagonism which is present in a sinner's heart. A woman with a criminal record was in prison for repeated offence. She was hard-hearted, and the jailers treated her accordingly. One day a Christian woman came to the prison to visit this woman. The Christian worker said to the prisoner, "I have come to see you because I love you and because God loves you." "That is a lie," the prisoner answered, "nobody loves me". "Yes, God loves you and so do I," the Christian woman insisted, and going to the prison warden asked that she be locked up with the woman to stay and suffer with her. The result was that this confirmed criminal came to see the love of God, gave her heart to Christ, and became a new creature. She came to trust the love of God through the love of a Christian.

The preaching of the Gospel must also be substantiated by consistent Christian living. Christians have no right to keep silent with their lips thinking that their lives are sufficient testimony for Christ. The Gospel must be told. They must bear testimony by word of mouth, but that testimony must be corroborated by consistent living. Too often the life of church members stamps whatever the preacher says as a lie. Sometimes the church must be awakened and gotten out of the way of the conversion of sinners. The life of Christians must prove the Gospel we preach as true.

Through word of mouth, through love and through life, then, the Gospel truth must be brought to bear upon the hearts of sinners. The ministry and laity alike must avail themselves of every opportunity to bring their testimony to bear upon the hearts of men. Unless they will thus labor together with God, the redemptive work of Christ among men will be crippled and lame. For this a revival of love is needed.

Is it not possible that in every church in the General Conference a group of believers band themselves together to meet regularly to pray and to think about the things which weigh on the Father's heart, and about the things which relate to the eternal welfare of their unbelieving friends? We may be confident that God will soon pour out the spirit of prayer and supplication and crown it with a blessed revival when this is done. In fact that itself is the beginning of a revival.

And is it not possible that these prayer groups in the churches consider themselves "bands of witness" who will prayerfully consider and decide upon active evangelistic enterprises in the community? When such things are done the revival has begun. Who can tell what a sweep such a movement will take when the whole church will give itself in earnest to be true and living witnesses for Christ Jesus.

## **IV. OUR CHURCH WITNESSING IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**By REV. JOHN J. PLENERT**

Real effective Evangelism can and will achieve its purpose in the degree that individual members accept responsibility for realization of a revival of vital religion in their own hearts and their own churches. If our churches are effectively to serve a distressed community and world, its members must possess and express such a religion. Mere nominal church members and professions that do not go beyond words will not help our church, community, nor world to turn back the tides of evil forces that would attempt to bring the whole world under the rule of brute force. The church in answering the world's needs is calling for Christians, real Christians, whose lives are under the mastery of Christ and the Cross. In your own church and in your own home you can help impart to religion that fresh vitality which is so urgently needed if our churches are to cope with the problems of today.

The following pages contain some practical suggestions for the local church to shine and witness. The suggestions, in general, can be adapted to any kind of a church. They are flexible and lend themselves to adaptation. They are offered as suggestions and not as an ideal program.

### **A. THE PASTOR'S PART**

1. A full surrender of self. A vessel sanctified for the Master's use.

2. A planned communion with God, which means a stated time and place of prayer and Bible study, at which time each minister be engaged in intercessory prayer for himself and fellow ministers, his church and other churches.

3. Seek in his own life and in the leadership of our churches to realize the divine resources which God places at the disposal of those who cooperate wholeheartedly in His purpose.

4. Recognize that the pastor's mission is not only to "feed the flock of God," but also to "do the work of an evangelist."



5. A re-study of the Old Testament Revivals; of Pentecost and the work which immediately followed, and the revival periods in church history.

6. Preach on the great truth of Christianity so it will lead the people in a revival of vital religion through: repentance, Bible study, prayer, and actively engaged in fellowship and service of Christ.

## B. THE CHURCH OFFICIALS' PART

1. Reconsecrate yourself and your talents and gifts to God and His service, seeking enrichment of your spiritual life through daily personal prayer and Bible study.

2. Assemble yourself together to discuss and give suggestions as to the needs and methods for the most effective and efficient service of your church in the community.

3. Assemble yourself with your pastor and study the best means for evangelism, and discuss with him the church problems, and make him realize that you are standing with him in all the work.

4. Organize yourself into a "Friendship Circle" and divide the church membership among yourself and become definitely interested in them: to pray for them, visit them, and be helpful to them.

5. Share Christ with your fellows and endeavor to enlist them in His service.

6. See to it that the church auxiliaries maintain an active interest in local, national and international affairs.

## C. THE PEOPLE'S PART

1. Endeavor to have a family altar in your home.

2. Form an inner prayer circle out of those who give much time to prayer, especially enlist the shut-in friends.

3. Have a definite time of prayer: for your church members, for the pastor, for the church officers, and all projects of the church.

4. Be actively engaged in your church and support it with your means and prayers.

5. Inform yourself about your local church, the District and General Conference, and about missions at home and abroad.

6. Choose one or more types of activities which seem to be most needed in your church, and enlist a group to tackle the task in each field.

#### D. THE CHURCH SCHOOL WORKER'S PART

1. Reconsecrate yourself and your talents to God and His service, seeking enrichment of your spiritual life through daily personal prayer and Bible study.

2. If possible, attend and participate in a worker's conference, or such other conference as the school may have.

3. Visit at least once (preferably once a quarter) in the home of each member of the group in which you are a leader.

4. Have a saving knowledge and an appreciation of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and be consecrated to Christ and His cause.

5. Create an enthusiastic and intelligent participation in building of a Christian community and world, and be able to give a Christian interpretation of life and the universe.

6. Be actively and prayerfully engaged in the church work, and lead your scholars to a saving faith in Christ, so that they will dedicate their life unto Him and will have a desire to participate in the life and work of the church.

#### E. THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S PART

1. Definitely acknowledge their open commitment to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and to speak in testimony of their Christian experience.

2. Covenant with God for a time of daily prayer and Bible reading and study.

3. Include in their activities some study program dealing with preparation for Christian home building and related subjects.

4. Be loyal, thorough, and effective in church membership, church attendance, church financial support, or share actively in the total program of the church.

5. Work out a plan to help your young people become better acquainted with the purpose and program of your church and denomination.

6. Make a careful study of what is being done for the youth of your church along such lines as Bible study, missions, stewardship, fellowship, recreation, service activities, etc. See where improvement should be made.

#### F. THE CHURCH ENGAGED IN REACHING THE UNCHURCHED

1. Make a survey of the community.
2. Record the names of every member of families visited who are not in the church.
3. Secure names of all Sunday School scholars over nine years of age, who are not in the church.
4. Secure names of all parents of the Sunday School scholars who are not in the church.
5. Make a card-index of all unchurched names secured.
6. Secure names of all adherents to the church who are not members.
7. Make a prayer list of all unchurched and divide it in your church among the praying people.

## V. THE EMOTIONAL ELEMENT IN PREACHING

By PROF. ARNOLD C. SCHULTZ

"We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5:20).

We all lament the ebb of religious interest encountered in many places. Among the many reasons given for this condition is our deficiency in passion, emotion, fervor, and in intensity of spirit. To one familiar with the phenomenal growth of the emotional sects when compared with the stagnancy of denominations, this reason has great force. One analysis of the situation says that, "The sects are strongest at those points of doctrine and practice where the denominations are weakest. They flourish by taking up the things that the great churches drop. An analysis of their outstanding tenets reveal that they were once characteristic of the greater bodies, but have now been neglected or discarded. This is a fact of the utmost importance, signifying that the churches are gradually widening the breach between themselves and the plain people."

As commonly interpreted emotions mean sympathies or feelings which are to be aroused by pathetic anecdotes. Superficial feelings become the object of preaching. My son give me thy tears seems to be the text. From this misinterpretation has resulted another equally fatal mistake opposite to it which is coldly logical. A false philosophy has resulted in a false homiletics, and this in turn has been related to a false theology.

The objections to an appeal to the emotions are too well known to bear repeating. All human action, whether on the plane of habit, reflection, or instinct, is, to some degree, accompanied by emotions. The normal interests and enterprises of life are quickened and sustained when a great emotional drive can be aroused in their support. Dr. Irwin Edman of Columbia University shows that a scientist working long hours in difficult experiments, a boy working his way through college, a father sacrificing rest and comfort that his children may be well provided for

are all laboring because of the "driving power which the emotions, more or less mixed, of curiosity, or tenderness, or self-assertion have released." Who expects to make soldiers storm a fortress without excitement? If these things be true how can we escape the emotional element in preaching?

In the verse of Scripture at the head of this paper the Greek word translated "beseech" is **parakalein**. The word is expressive of that appeal which is intended to reach the will through the emotions. This word is used one hundred and fifty-nine times to express the idea of preaching in the New Testament. In some respects this word is the most significant and most noble word in the New Testament concerning Christian preaching. It emphasizes tenderness, power of persuasive appeal, and fervor. In the light of the analysis at the beginning of this discussion it may not be too much to say that a radical defect in modern preaching is just that quality which is conveyed in the word **parakalein**, a lack of fervid, pointed influencing of the emotions.

The early preachers of New Testament times were conscious of the significance of their message so they could not deliver it without feeling. The great truths of Christianity are eminently adapted to stir the feelings. To speak of these truths without awakening emotion and feeling is wrong and unnatural. We have been habitually too cold in regards to them,—who can deny it? If we entered more deeply into Christ's estimate of the value of a single soul it would be impossible to be listless, icily regular, and insipid. The emotions are also fed by the realization of the infinite problems which are faced day by day by the souls with which we come in contact and by the consideration of the tragedy of human life as it goes on before us. "A want of earnestness", says John Angell James, "in the execution of that commission, which is designed to save immortal souls from eternal ruin, and raise them to everlasting life. is a spectacle which if it were not common, would fill us with amazement, indignation, and contempt."

Cicero says that it is only passion that makes the orator a king. He states that his success was the result of a mighty fire in his soul so great that he could not contain



himself. Demosthenes agonized to save his country and frequently spoke with such emotion that his opponents said he was mentally unbalanced. But when we eulogize these great orators we condemn ourselves for we fall far short of them in earnestness. The salvation of a single soul out of the multitudes that come under the influence of the ministry is an event which has consequences inconceivably more momentous than all the purposes for which these orators exhausted their energies.

Many people shrink from any attempt to awaken the emotions. It seems to be taken for granted that whenever the emotions are aroused they are over-aroused. Of course, a mere emotionalism, a continuous address to feeling or a suspense of the judgment or reasoning faculties should be guarded against. But neither must we have a cold intellectualism. Jonathan Edwards' mighty sermon was entirely an appeal to the reason but it can be described as "logic on fire." We may be shining lights in the world, but there is a great difference between a shining light and a burning and shining light. Abbe Roux says, "Reason, reason, as much as you like; but beware of thinking that it answers for everything. This mother loves her child; will reason comfort her? Does cool reason control the inspired poet, the heroic warrior, the lover? Reason guides but a small part of man, and that the least interesting. The rest obeys feeling, true or false; and passion, good or bad." Sermons should never be satisfied with clearly proving without also strongly moving.

Inspired preachers and teachers have always acted on this principle. The prophets of the Old Testament made the most impassioned appeals. The language of Jesus Christ and the apostles is frequently surcharged with emotion. The work of the most effective preachers of all time indicates the value and influence of the emotional element in preaching. Baxter, Whitfield, Wesley, Oliver Heywood, Brainard, Murray McCheyne, or Payson—of all these men and others it may be said that God made "winds His messengers and His ministers flames of fire."

The emotions, then, are really the objective point of pulpit argument. Preaching does not fulfill its purpose until it persuades men. Logic never persuades in the things with which the minister has to do. One reason why

uneducated ministers sometimes have such power with the masses is that they understand the people to whom they minister, while educated men frequently do not. And yet emotions are mental rather than physical.

The emotions, then, are really the objective point of a desire to act. Desire expresses the nature of emotions, since the emotions produce that effect upon the mind which makes one wish to do what is asked. Whatever helps to create a desire acts directly upon the emotions. The emotions that must be reached by the sermon are thoughtful, quiet, watchful, not excitable and blind. Preaching must pass through the emotions to produce a strong desire to do what is requested.

All the objections made to God's commands are located in the emotions and not in the reason. These objections are bushes behind which selfishness hides, as Adam did from God. Preachers have shouted from the housetops, "Quit your meanness," and "People ought to live differently." But more is required of preachers than to give information. The wicked and slothful servant knew his duty very well, but he was dominated by those mean emotions which were shown in his insulting confession. Men act according to their emotions, not according to their beliefs as to right and wrong. It does not make people better to teach them what is right and what is wrong unless you arouse in them the desire to do the right and avoid the wrong.

Thousands of tests of "moral knowledge" as compared with "moral conduct" have been made and there is not much agreement between knowledge of right and wrong on the one hand and right and wrong conduct on the other. John Dewey, great philosopher and educator, says, "There is nothing in the nature of ideas about honesty or purity, which automatically transforms these into good character or conducts." We must instruct people as to what is right and wrong, but this will not of itself make them want to do the right. Most ministers can illustrate that ad infinitum out of their own experience with young people. The Scriptures also show that ethical codes alone are futile. The emotional drives of an individual must be reached by

the preacher before that individual can do as the sermon requires.

If men are controlled by their emotions their emotions are not voluntary. One cannot love, or hate, or exercise any sensibility of the mind as one can move his fingers over the keyboard of a piano. Consequently the duty of the preacher is to reach these emotions before the hearer can do as the sermon demands. This philosophy seems to be recognized by the Bible and is emphasized in such passages as, "The carnal heart is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." Hortatory preaching that ignores the emotions is purely informative and takes on the nature of a command. People who are bond-slaves to sin will never obey any such ipse dixit of the preacher. Men usually do not turn from sin simply because they ought to. So strong is the opposition which the gospel is confronted with in human nature, so antagonistic is the natural heart to obedience and faith, and so powerful are the temptations of life, that men must be aroused very frequently to impassioned emotion if they would overcome all obstacles, and be victorious over the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Thus a great responsibility rests upon the preacher to do everything in his power to secure the obedience of his audience. Like Baxter we should, "Preach as never sure to preach again; and as a dying man to dying men." The more thoughtful and thought-provoking preaching is, the greater is the warrant and the louder is the call for emphasis. The danger is that the preachers who present to the audience the least substance of truth, are in danger of giving it too prominent a place, while those whose preaching has the richest content of truth, are in danger of giving it no place at all.

All around us the world is throbbing with emotion. Whether in the pursuit of politics, of trade, of science, or of pleasure men are driven by the force of their emotions. And our congregations, as they listen to our preaching on the Lord's Day and compare it with what they encounter every day in the week, should not be left to feel that they are turning from the brilliant rays of the electric light to the meager yellow flame of a small candle.

## VI. CONSERVING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

By DR. J. H. LANGENWALTER

"Once a Church member always a Church member." This statement is only a half truth. If it were wholly true there would be no point in the request for writing this article. Many people join churches only to lapse their membership sooner or later. The reasons for joining and the reasons for leaving the Church are almost as varied as the people who engage in these procedures.

The Evangelism Committee has done an excellent piece of fact finding. This makes it possible to deal with our subject in an objective way. Mere opinions and guesses have no place in the discussion of a vital subject such as CONSERVING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

When more than two-thirds of the ministers who reply to a questionnaire agree as to the causes for the loss in membership, one is no longer guessing about these causes. The causes enumerated may not cover all that is involved but they indicate the direction in which the solution is to be sought. The Evangelism Committee reports one dozen causes. We shall deal with them in the order in which they are presented.

### 1. INTERMARRIAGE

Why should the Home and the Church ever be brought into conflict? Love draws us to God. It also draws us to others who love God. It just as certainly draws us to another with whom we are willing to share life, including God and others. Why should it become a tragedy in the lives of two young people if this love for another reaches across lines whose meaning they do not understand? What wonder that many of them reach the conclusion the denominations are little more than a glorified caste system.

The solution of this complex system may be much simplified by remembering that membership in the Kingdom of God is primary to membership in any denomination. Young people should by all means be encouraged to join the same denomination. The best time to settle this

question is before they are engaged. That is the time they should face all serious problems confronting them. That is also the time when the respective homes and churches can do much to stand by helpfully. Since much forethought has seldom been practiced, it behooves the churches to do all they can to overcome the evils of mixed marriages afterwards. This cannot be done in a Christian spirit by placing the blame onto the young people who have established a home under such conditions. That is the most certain way of driving them out of the Church.

The better way is for the churches in a community to make a survey. Then let the ministers divide the cards in such a way as to give the one whose member attends most regularly the two cards of a given home first. If he can win the other member over then one mixed marriage has been unified. If he cannot succeed within a reasonable length of time he should turn both cards over to the other minister. It works. In a community of six protestant churches, where this problem had reached an acute stage, more than 80 per cent of the mixed marriages were unified in less than 18 months. The attendance at all churches was increased materially and there came a different spirit into the life of the community. Unification proved more wholesome than had the threat of ex-communication which had been used by several of the churches before facing the whole problem squarely.

Wholesome opportunities should be provided for young people to become acquainted with each other through denominational retreats, conventions and other gatherings. The mating instinct and denominational loyalty can be brought into harmony. That would take care of a large part of our problem of intermarriage. Members who join other churches are not necessarily lost to us. Often they do a great piece of missionary work for our principles as well as for the Kingdom of God. Neither are those brought into our churches always a detriment.

## 2. INDIFFERENCE

If a person has no interest which would help to make him take a helpful or sacrificial attitude, he has no place as a member of a Christian Church. If his "indifference" is merely a defensive attitude because of



something which displeases him, then it behooves the Church to find out what that is and remove the cause if possible. Indifference is so difficult to meet because it is so foreign to the Spirit of Christ. It is well, however, that we are sure that we have a case of real indifference before we pass judgment. The way to meet indifference is to help people find interests which accord with the Spirit of Christ.

### 3. SECTS OF AN EMOTIONAL TYPE

God has endowed us with capacities for thought, for feeling and for decision. A truly Christian life learns to balance these gifts of God for the kind of service which Christ has a right to expect of those who claim to be His followers. What He has done for mankind and what He expects of people naturally moves them deeply. His religion calls for action and human action is largely determined by feeling. For that reason the emotions play a large part in the field of religion. If rightly used they are a great blessing. If wrongly used they often become something which falls little short of a curse. Meeting emotionalism with emotionalism does not solve the problem. We need to prepare people by helpful suggestion for a well-balanced use of thought, feeling and decision. That is the way Jesus lived and taught and we have found no better way. Jesus used the emotions of people in a wholesome way. Churches need to do that more also.

### 4. QUARRELS AND MISUNDERSTANDING

What people quarrel about is of little consequence as compared with the fact that they quarrel at all. When people catch the significance of this truth their quarrels tend to dissolve themselves.

Misunderstandings reveal the fact that two or more people do not see eye to eye. That may be due to fear in one or more of its many forms such as jealousy, prejudice, anger, hatred or suspicion. It may also be due to a lack of information. Sometimes this arises from the fact that one has not had a chance to find out. Sometimes it is due to unwillingness.

Church members should read Mathew 18 often. It is a good tonic as well as a good preventative. Reading in this

case means to read and re-read until you have thoroughly masticated, digested and assimilated what Jesus was really trying to show to people whose lives were cluttered up with quarrels and misunderstandings. One of the symptoms of a quarrelsome church member is the anxiety that his name be kept on the church book. That endangers the spiritual life of the whole fellowship. Dismissal usually only makes matters worse because that is a type of coercion. If a quarrelsome member threatens to leave the church, it is sometimes well to treat the threat as a request for dismissal. If the church can accept such a request in the spirit of Christian love, that is often the best way out.

In the case of misunderstandings it is necessary that the real cause of misunderstanding be discovered. If it is a lack of information, that should be supplied in the most helpful and gracious manner possible. If it is a case of stubbornness, then, as in the case of quarrels, it becomes a matter for the use of patience. It is well to remember in this connection that Jesus used two meaningful words for patience. One means that we keep our balance and the other that we keep up our courage for a long time, and greatly.

All attempts to deal with cases of quarrelsomeness and misunderstanding require a double application of the Kingdom of God first and membership of a church organization afterward. One might lose a member of the organization and "conserve" a member for and in the Kingdom of God. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye fall into temptation."

## 5. WORLDLINESS

This word is one of those dangerous generalities which so often cause more heat than light in the discussion of a subject. Essentially the chief characteristics of the spirit of the world are selfishness and pride. These are often found under a cloak of religious phraseology. That makes them doubly dangerous for the conservation of membership in a Christian fellowship. Worldliness does not consist in your doing what I do not like. It consists in either of us doing what tends to estrange us from Christ. One of the worst forms of this estrangement is saying "Lord, Lord," when we do not intend to live what these words

imply. That again places us face to face with the relative emphasis of membership in the Kingdom of God and of an organization known as a church.

## 6. NO ROOM IN THE CHURCH.

This may refer to the seating capacity of the building for worship. If this is the case it is high time to face the problem in a forward looking way. However, this is seldom the case. If you get a part for your automobile which does not fit there is no room for it in your machine. The same is true of church membership. To try to enumerate all the possible combinations at this point would be as useless as it would be impossible. If there is a misfit it is necessary to find out what is the reason. The difficulty may lie with the member. It may also be chargeable to the Church. Perhaps both are below par of what a member and what a church ought to be.

If the emphasis is placed upon the Kingdom of God first and if both the member and the church are sincere, there will be a way. Perhaps that particular member should join some other organization. Perhaps the organization which he has joined should mend its ways. Such a procedure will cost time and effort. It is worth all it costs.

## 7. NO MENNONITE CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY BEFORE

Apparently this refers to Mennonites who have joined some other denomination because there was no Mennonite Church in the community in which they lived. If they are rendering a real service in the church which they have joined, why should they not continue? After all, we are here to perform a mission for Christ. Is it not better that the members of a church carry the spirit of their religion into many places than that they should adhere to a certain name? Should we not be interested more in what kind of Mennonites we are at heart than in how many names we have on our denominational lists?

If a Mennonite Church is organized in such a community after members of the Mennonite faith have lived there, the question of whether they should join this new Church should be settled on the basis of which step is the more important from the angle of the Kingdom of God.

A Mennonite at heart often does more in another denomination than do many who would not think of joining another church. Our forefathers insisted on: "Lieber kleiner, aber reiner." That attitude is still worth more than mere numbers.

## 8. LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

The Bible has many references to the fact that God longs for people of all kinds of languages to worship Him. Let everyone love and revere his mother tongue but let him love and revere the longings of God his Father more. Human pride says: "Let them learn **my** language." Christian love says: "I will learn **their** language in order that we may worship God together." In the latter case one does not lose his mother tongue. He gains another language by means of which he can worship God and help others.

## 9. OPPOSITION TO MENNONITE DOCTRINE

Non-resistance is mentioned especially. Opposition to any idea is no sign that that idea is wrong or dangerous. All great ideas have been opposed. Those who dared to hold them have felt the keen sting of disapproval beyond human endurance many times. That did not change the truth.

If non-resistance is better than the use of force, then let us know why. We need a reason for our faith. The demands for unreasoning adherence to a doctrine has done more harm than the opposition of those who did not understand. Even youth understands that a man who goes about with the proverbial chip on his shoulder does not succeed with his neighbors like the man who treats them with reasonable consideration, even at a sacrifice to himself. Even a child can see that it is easier to settle a difference of interest or opinion before there has been physical combat than after words have been followed by blows. In the light of these simple observations, the teachings of Jesus take on a new and convincing meaning.

## 10. LACK OF SPIRITUAL LIFE IN THE CHURCH

This criticism is sometimes advanced by those who have not learned to see the difference between spiritual life

and "spirited noise." If there is a lack of Spirit-guided life in the Church, one can help by definitely building up one's own spiritual life. This is contagious and gives God a chance to build what is lacking in the most helpful way. Fretfulness and criticism seldom induce spiritual growth.

## 11. DISTANCE OF RESIDENCE FROM THE CHURCH

This is a serious problem, especially where children are involved. Either move nearer to the Church which you prefer or join some other church, at least for the time being. Many times people find it a bit difficult to distinguish between what is a reason and what is a mere excuse when they refer to the difficulties involved because of the distance which they live from "their" Church.

## 12. FAULTY LEADERSHIP

No leader is always right. There are few leaders who are always wrong. When a leader makes a mistake, if he is worthy of being a leader at all, he can be approached helpfully. Nobody is more glad or ready to do better than he who knows the burdens of leadership. Small criticism, especially by other "leaders" makes matters worse.

A leader necessarily has to stand alone much of the time. He must be ahead of his group and he must face forward, else he is no leader. These facts make it impossible for him to be with his group in every way. That is a part of the price he pays for leadership. He cannot turn around to defend himself and at the same time look forward in order to lead. The great responsibilities of leadership make the best preparation none too good. An important factor in such preparation is that leaders should have a working acquaintance with each other before they must assume full responsibility of work. That is why our schools are of such great value for the growth of churches and the conservation of their membership.



## **VII. HOW TO MAKE EVANGELISM MORE EFFECTIVE IN OUR CONFERENCE**

**By REV. A. J. NEUENSCHWANDER**

When John Wesley began his great work of evangelism, he said: "My field is the world". According to our assignment, our scope and field is limited to the General Conference area. It is therefore essential that we recognize the type and class of people we have in our Conference; study our needs carefully and suggest only such methods that carry with them the greatest amount of assurance of bringing honor to Christ. These methods should be acceptable to God and the churches, and at the same time give promise of producing the desired result of making evangelism more effective in our Conference churches.

The replies to the questionnaire, that the Committee on Evangelism sent out, indicate that there is need for greater effort and effectiveness in evangelism. They indicate further that there seems to be a lack of knowledge as to how to apply the technique of evangelism. If the preceding pamphlets in this series are carefully studied, no doubt any leader will find many suggestions how to approach the problem of evangelism; furthermore he will discover many ways and means how to work out a program that is suitable and adequate for his field. Since the other pamphlets have covered the essential phases of preparation for effective evangelism, our task is to bring forth ways and means of putting the program into action.

We need to consider certain basic principles that will help to produce effective evangelism in our churches, before we come to the program proper.

### **IMPRESSIVE SPIRITUAL LIFE**

The first essential and basic principle that we need, is a spiritual life in the congregation that is easily discerned. By being easily discerned, we do not mean a spiritual life lived for show, at certain seasons of the year; but a life that is deeply spiritual, genuine, and is effective year in and year out. Such spiritual life in believers is attractive and winsome because of its consistency. Shallow streams produce a rushing sound as they bound over the rocks, but deep waters flow quietly. The deep waters carry the

burdens of transportation, and the deep spiritual lives carry the burdens of the Christian religion. Souls that are Christ-born and Christ-motivated live such lives that men must say Christ liveth in them. Such spiritual lives bring results. Some time ago a young man came to his minister and said: "I would like to confess Christ and join your church. I can no longer withstand the Christian influence of a member of your church who is my employer in business. I should like to have what he has found."

## CONCERN FOR SOULS

The second principle that is basic for evangelism that is effective, is for our church members to have a compelling concern for souls to be saved. The fact needs to be burned anew into the hearts of Christians generally that anyone without Christ, is lost. Somehow we need to rekindle the Apostolic conviction that only those are saved who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Oh, that the church might never be complacent concerning the unsaved! The Gospel chorus, used in certain places, should be known everywhere.

Lead me to some soul today  
O teach me, Lord, just what to say;  
Friends of mine are lost in sin,  
And cannot find their way.  
Few there are who seem to care,  
And few there are who pray;  
Melt my heart and fill my life,  
Give me one soul today."

Naturally this concern for souls makes for constant and wholehearted support of Home and Foreign Missionary work as well as evangelism.

## THE EVANGELISTIC SPIRIT

That the cardinal principle, an evangelistic spirit, is needed, is self evident when we consider the fact that, "in the days of the great Evangelist Finney, seven Christians would win one for Christ. Before the first World War fourteen accomplished this; the year after the war, it took twenty-one to bring about one conversion, and of late years, statistics show, it takes twenty-eight to win one to Christ." Does anyone doubt the need of a revival of the evangelistic spirit?

There are many who agree that a certain small per cent of the church membership should have this evangelistic spirit. Our contention is that this is an inadequate conception, because when Christ spoke to the early believers He included all when He said: "Ye are the light . . . ye are the salt of the earth." The Apostle Paul constantly sought to enlist everyone in his great enterprise of spreading the Gospel. Therefore the evangelistic spirit ought to be manifest at all times by the majority of our church members. For instance, if an unsaved stranger would enter into one of our worship services he should feel it in the greeting accorded him, in the graceful ushering, the warm-hearted music by the choir, as well as in the pastor's sermon. From all these sources he is to be made conscious of his need of Christ and an assurance that a constant welcome awaits him from the Saviour of all mankind.

To attain the indwelling of the evangelistic spirit, there needs to be a wide-spread God-consciousness in our churches. Many church members, by their daily lives, manifest that they have little or no concern for God. God is not vital in their lives. We need to recapture the lost radiance of God-consciousness in our daily living. The spirit of evangelism is at a low ebb until God is a dominant fact in our lives.

The expression of the evangelistic spirit must be for others. Someone has discovered that nearly three-fourths of the miracles of Jesus were performed not because those helped had asked Him, but because some one in full faith had interceded for those in need. Many of these miracles were performed for their physical well being, while our task in intercession is for the soul welfare of others who are outside of Christ.

### Others

Lord help me to live from day to day  
In such a self-forgetful way  
That even when I kneel to pray  
My prayer shall be for "Others".

Help me in all the work I do  
To ever be sincere and true,  
And know that all I'd do for You  
Must needs be done for "Others".

"Others," Lord, yes, "Others",  
Let this my motto be,  
Help me to live for "Others".  
That I may live for Thee.

There is one more way in which the evangelistic spirit must manifest itself, if it is to be effective,—in beautiful personal lives. The Acts of the Apostles report what happened when Christ could manifest Himself through the early Christian leaders. We need a repetition of the demonstration of Christ in the present-day acts of the disciples. When Peter and John entered into a village with great boldness it was noted that they "had been with Jesus." The evangelistic spirit can operate only when men know that we too "have been with Jesus."

"Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,  
All His wonderful passion and purity;  
O Thou Spirit divine, All my nature refine,  
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."

### THE EVANGELISTIC PROGRAM

Naturally this part of our subject needs most consideration. Everything that has gone before in other pamphlets and this one, are preliminary and preparatory steps for the most vital part,—the making of our evangelism more effective.

(a) Catechism classes have been utilized by a large majority of ministers as a means of enrolling the young people in the Cause of Christ. The questionnaire showed that a small per cent were opposed or had not used this system. We would encourage such to study carefully the materials on hand and add thereto as they find need. The two booklets: "Catechism Revised 1937" and "A Guide to Christian Teaching", are worthy contributions in this field. There is no set way or manner to secure the full and free decision of the individual to accept Christ as Saviour. This leaves each pastor to proceed as he finds it best and most effective. Biblical instruction, mixed well with devotion and challenge is sure to bring forth fruit for the Master.

(b) In many instances where there has been a co-operative agreement between the pastor and the Sunday

School leaders, the Decision Day has been fruitful in winning converts to Christ. While this method has not been used very extensively in our Conference churches, it holds rich possibilities; especially in such schools where a goodly number of the pupils come from non-churched homes. Naturally Decision Day does not work itself out successfully any more than any other worthy project for the Lord. It takes great care to prepare the ground, which needs to be watered by prayer, as well as cooperation between the pastor and every Sunday School officer. This nucleus of leaders would do well to gather for conference and prayer frequently as the Decision Day approaches. Frequently decisions for Christ by children, have opened the doors of homes for Christ to touch parents and other members of the family.

(c) The Young People's Group should be definitely enlisted in winning their comrades, who might be without Christ, to a decision. Many societies also utilize the opportunities to hold open air meetings that are of an evangelistic type.

(d) Evangelistic Preaching. By evangelistic sermons, we do not mean that each sermon must close with an altar call. A sermon can be and often is evangelistic, without the formality of such an invitation. Many such sermons and series of sermons have been preached in order to stir up the spirits of the saints to action; rather than with the expectation that the unconverted might be convicted, because today in many of our worship services no such outsider may be present. Such sermons, however, still are essential to prepare the way for the evangelistic spirit to manifest itself in some personal work.

There are distinct dvantages in preparing and preaching series of evangelistic sermons. Step by step and week by week a pastor can approach certain questionable practices, since they naturally come in that line of thought, without going far afield to bring in certain points for correction. From another viewpoint the series offers an opportunity to show how the Lord worked in the past, in convicting souls, and how He will work today if given a chance. The Lord is the same "yesterday, today and forever."

(e) Bible Conferences or Evangelistic Meetings by outside ministers. There was a time when it was taken for granted that non-Mennonite leadership had to be secured for these special meetings. In recent years the Lord raised up among our own brethren, men who are well qualified and of proven worth in this field. From the replies to the questionnaire, it is noted that 72 per cent of those reporting used Mennonite leaders for these services. The Bible Conference lends itself well for evangelistic emphasis and we know of many that have been very fruitful. The so-called evangelistic meetings are sometimes misunderstood, and because people have wrong ideas about them, they are not used as much as they might be. We must all learn that if we have a Bible Conference or a series of evangelistic meetings; in order that they be successful, a great deal of preparation and waiting on the Lord needs to precede the effort. Each of these methods should be so used as to contribute to the stirring up of the evangelistic spirit, and the deepening of the concern for souls. If these are the outcome, then some immediate results are likely to follow, as well as contributing to the further reaching evangelistic program.

(f) The Evangelistic Campaign. This is an effort that should cover at least two months, with the local minister as the one to bring the messages, on Sundays. It is essential to lay plans well in advance with the church officers and leading members. When the campaign is announced, give the date when the new converts are to be received into the church. Let the pastor plan and bring a series of evangelistic messages Sunday after Sunday culminating on the day set for the Ingathering.

By special bulletins and by means of articles in the local paper, the Evangelistic Campaign should be kept before the community. It will help greatly to have attractive folders printed; giving the name of the church, the purpose of the Campaign, the subjects of the messages for the succeeding Sundays. It is well to have a Decision Card printed on the folder that can be signed and detached. In this way the need of making a decision for Christ faces everyone in the community. Enlist the aid of the membership of the church to invite all unchurched in the community to come to the services. The members who make these first contacts should prepare the way for follow up



work as the Ingathering campaign progresses. From the replies and visits to the services, a prospect list can be compiled. This list should constitute a special prayer list, and such members who may not be able to make personal visits should also be enlisted as definite prayer intercessors.

Expect definite results from the Lord. Utilize the mid-week service as a time for definite prayer to the Lord, to guide and bless each effort that is made, to win souls to the Lord, to guide and bless each effort that is made, to win souls to Christ. To bring the follow up work to a conclusion it has been most fruitful to send out members two by two, even as Christ did in His day. This challenges the workers and drives them to more fervent prayer. At times it may be desirable to have the pastor take a lay worker along in this work. In this way laymen have risen to noble heights and have had endless joy in winning a soul to Christ. The Day of Ingathering comes, the final results are left with the Lord of the Harvest; but whether the decisions for Christ be many or few, the day will long be remembered as a high tide of spiritual life and attainment.

The Basic Principles, once in full operation, the evangelistic program can be repeated every year or every other year according to circumstances, thus keeping effective evangelism constantly in the foreground, to the honor of Christ and for the salvation of many souls.

#### A PRAYER BY REV. LOUIS H. EVANS, D.D.

“O Thou great Lover of Souls, begin in our own hearts the revival of a love that seeks out men. Forgive us for our impersonal prayers. Forgive us for those whom we have loved little or not at all. Teach us, Lord, the tenacity of intercession, the privilege of a personal regard for souls, the shepherding that not alone calls to the whole flock, but takes souls into the arms of prayer, one by one, and brings them back to the fold. Too often, Lord, we are ranchers, busy and impersonal. Lord, make us shepherds when we pray. Praying for the lost with a great zeal, we shall pursue them with a great zeal. Grant us this, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.”

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON EVANGELISM IN MENNONITE CHURCHES

#### I. THE NEED FOR EVANGELISM

1. Approximately how many people in your church community are not members of a Christian church?
2. Do you base your estimate upon a survey?
3. Do you feel that sufficient effort has been made to win the unchurched of your community to Christ?
4. Are there Mennonite families in your community which have left the Mennonite church? Indicate probable reasons:

#### II. THE EFFORTS MADE IN EVANGELISM

1. What recent efforts has your church made to reach the unchurched? Have you had special meetings? If so, indicate duration, frequency, and their general nature. Were they conducted by the pastor, by another Mennonite, or by a non-Mennonite?
2. What efforts has your Sunday School made in evangelism? Do you have a decision day? Do you use decision cards? Do your Sunday School teachers make appeals to their pupils to accept Christ? Do they seek to win unchurched children?
3. Describe other efforts in evangelism made either by your Young People's Societies or by other organizations?

#### III. THE ATTITUDE TOWARD EVANGELISM

1. How does your church react to the following methods of evangelism? Indicate whether: Favorable Unfavorable
  - a. Catechetical classes -----
  - b. Special mass meetings -----
  - c. Altar calls -----
  - d. Decision cards -----
  - e. Street meetings -----
  - f. Personal soul-winning -----
2. What methods of evangelism do you feel are most effective in your church?

3. On what basis is your church willing to admit to full membership individuals who have been brought up in non-Mennonite homes?

#### IV. THE DESIRES FOR THE FUTURE

1. Would your church welcome the assistance of a General Conference leader in evangelism?
2. Would your church prefer that each District Conference have its own leadership in evangelism?
3. Would your church rather work at its evangelistic task alone?
4. If assistance is desired, who would you consider an acceptable leader in this work?

#### V. PLEASE SHARE WITH EVANGELISM COMMITTEE ANY SUGGESTION, EXPERIENCES, OR CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISMS:

## **APPENDIX B**

### **MY COVENANT WITH GOD**

Recognizing my own need of a deeper and more active spiritual life and the great need of the world for a knowledge of Jesus Christ, I dedicate myself anew to Him and His service, and herewith register my purpose to consider carefully how best I can help bring to pass His purpose in my church and for the world, and to choose from among the suggestions in this pamphlet or elsewhere one or more specific courses of action which I will undertake.





